

Remarks/ Arguments

In response to the Office Action mailed April 23, 2004, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections of the claims.

Claims 1 - 21 remain.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7 – 9 12, 14 and 17 are being amended.

Claims 2, 4, 11, and 13 have been cancelled.

Claims 1- 3, 6, 9 – 12, and 16 – 21 stand rejected and Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 13 – 15 have been objected – to as being improperly based on a rejected base claim, but are otherwise allowable. Applicants have amended the Claims as follows to place the allowable subject matter into proper form.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of objected – to Claim 4 and intervening Claim 2. Claims 2 and 4 have been cancelled.

Objected – to Claims 5, 7, and 8 have each been placed into independent form by including the subject matter of former (un-amended) independent Claim 1 and intervening Claim 2.

Independent Claim 9 has been amended to include the subject matter of former objected – to Claim 13 and intervening Claim 11. Claims 11 and 13 have been cancelled.

Objected – to Claims 14 and 15 have been placed into proper independent form by inclusion of the subject of former (un – amended) independent Claim 9 and intervening Claim 11.

Independent Claim 17, and hence Claims 18 – 21, have been amended to include the subject matter of former Claims 11 and 13.

Remaining Claims 1, 3, 5 – 10, 12, and 15 – 21 should now be in condition for allowance.


No new matter has been added; the claims have been merely amended to more particularly claim the subject matter Applicant(s) believe(s) is inventive. Applicant(s) respectfully submit that the Claims as they now stand are patentably distinct over the art cited during the prosecution thereof.

Applicant respectfully requests a Third Month Extension of Time to File this Response. Enclosed with this paper is Form PTO/SB/22 with Extension Fees in the amount of \$1,420.00 as reflected on the PTO/SB/17 Fee Transmittal.

With the addition of no new claims, no additional filing fees are due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 20-0821 of Thompson & Knight LLP.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments concerning this paper or the present application in general, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (214) 969 - 1749.

Respectfully submitted,
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